BATMAN
BATMAN
464
EARLY JULY 91
US $1.00
CAN $1.25
UK 50p
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Suddenly, there is no difference between man and monster...
ROUGHER

SPIRIT OF THE BEAST
PART THREE: SACRIFICE
"WE ARE BORN WITH A PURPOSE IN LIFE... AND WE HAVE TO FULFILL THAT PURPOSE."
--Rolling Thunder, Native American Medicine Man

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BATMAN 464. Early July, 1991. Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: BATMAN, DC Comics Subscriptions, P.O. Box 0528, Baldwin, NY 11510. Annual subscription rate $12.00. Canadian subscribers must add $8.00 for postage and GST. GST # is R125921072. All other foreign countries must add $12.00 for postage. U.S. funds only. Copyright © 1991 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017 (212) 949-6850. Printed in U.S.A.
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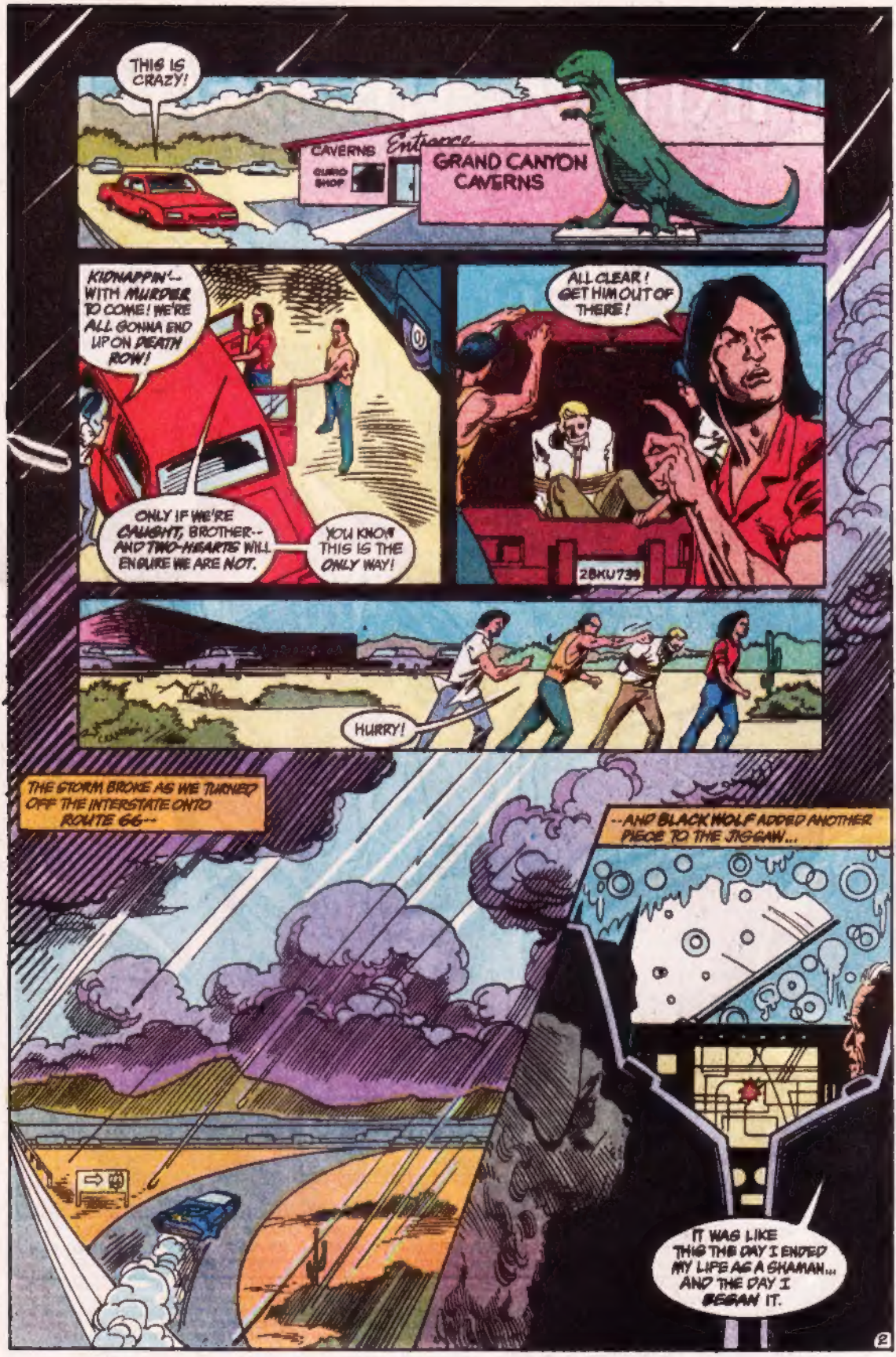
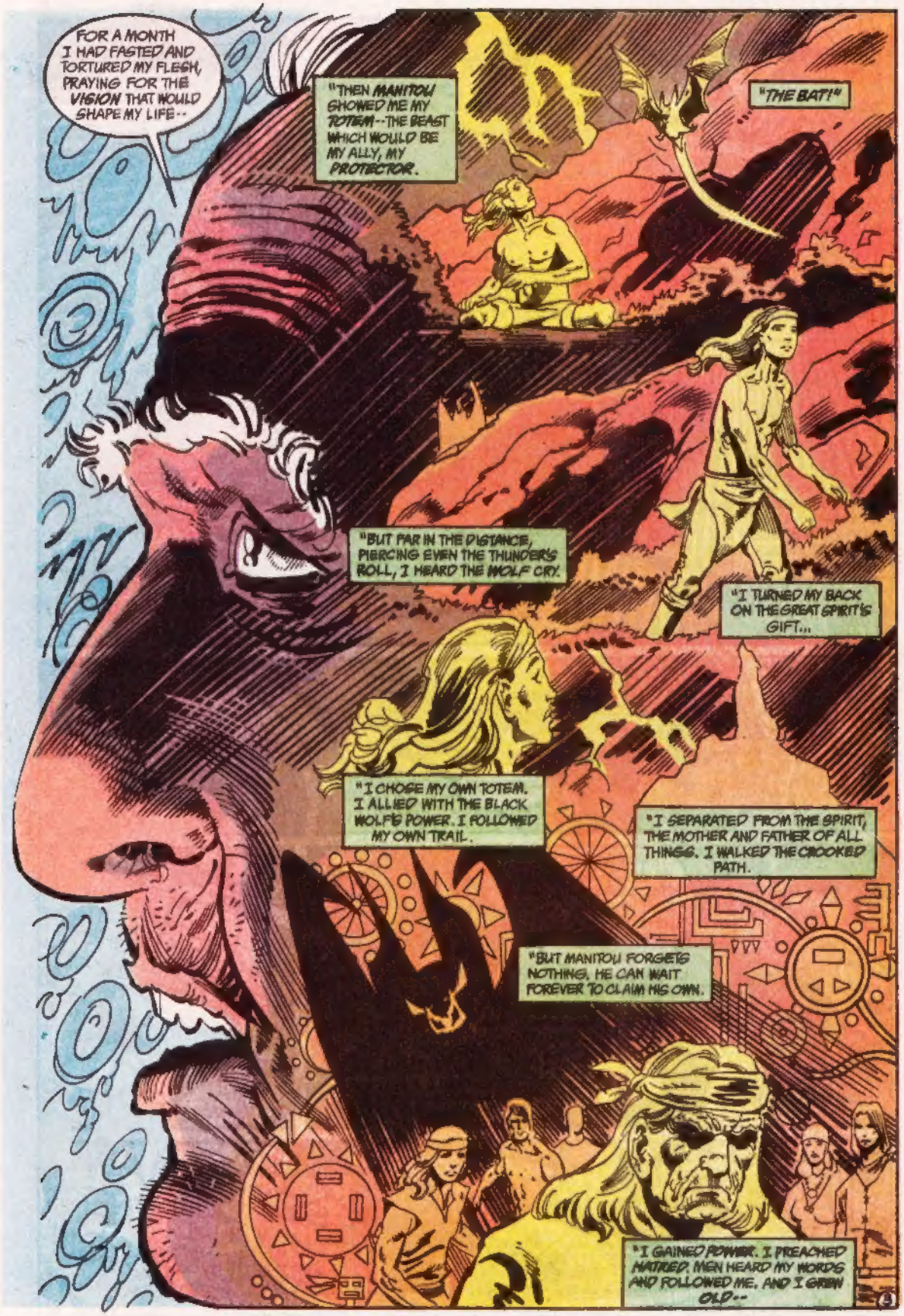
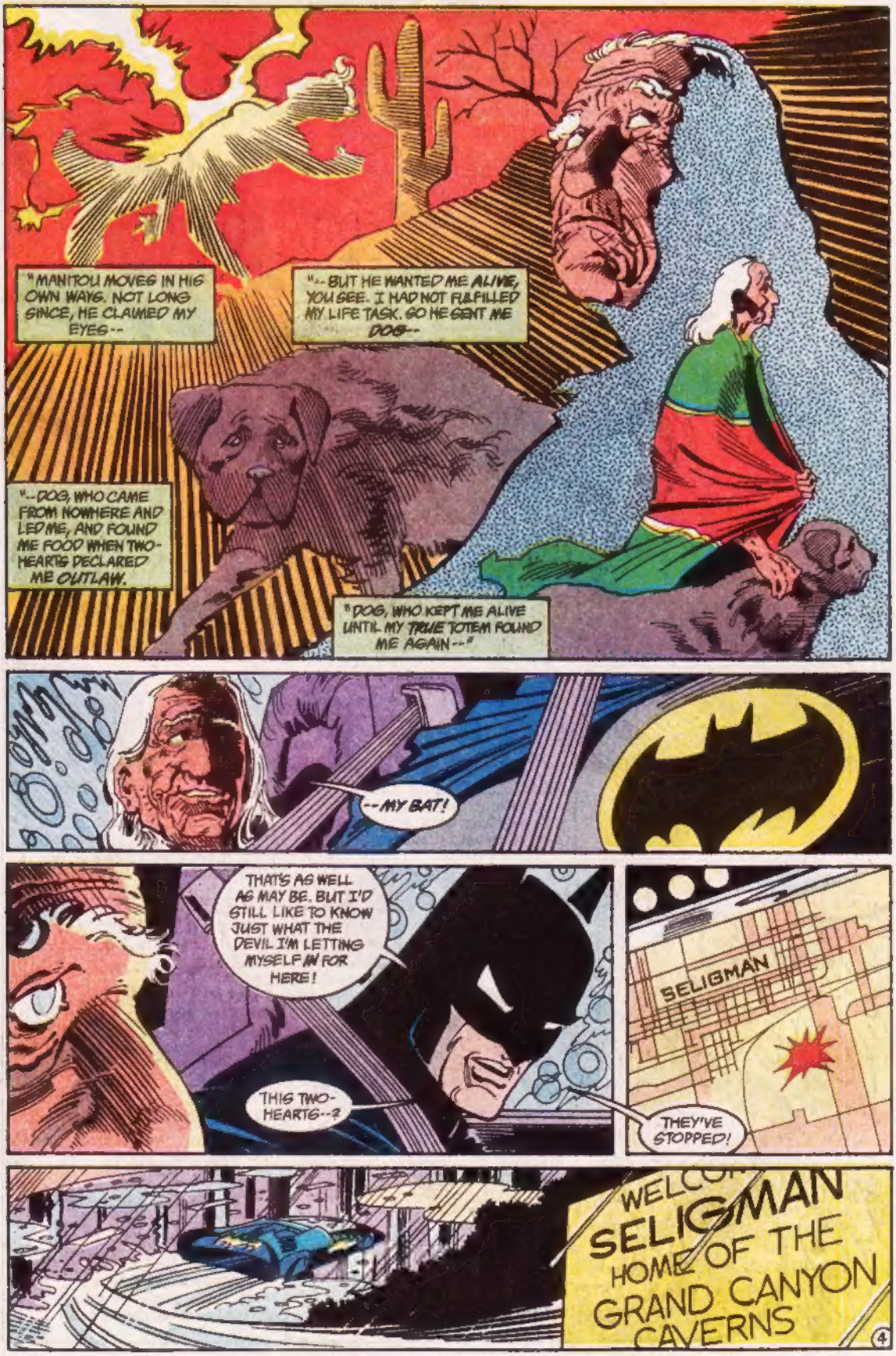
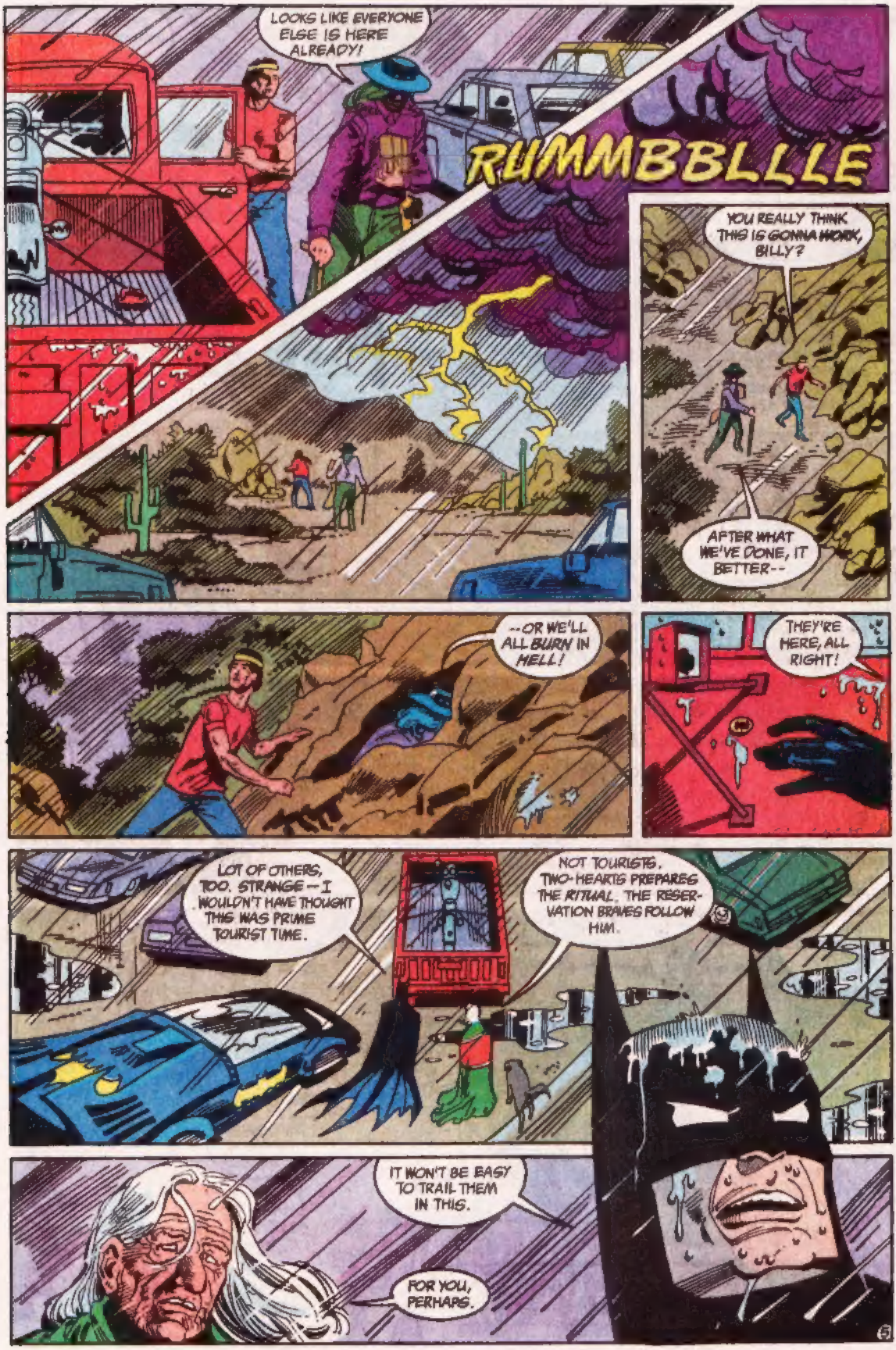
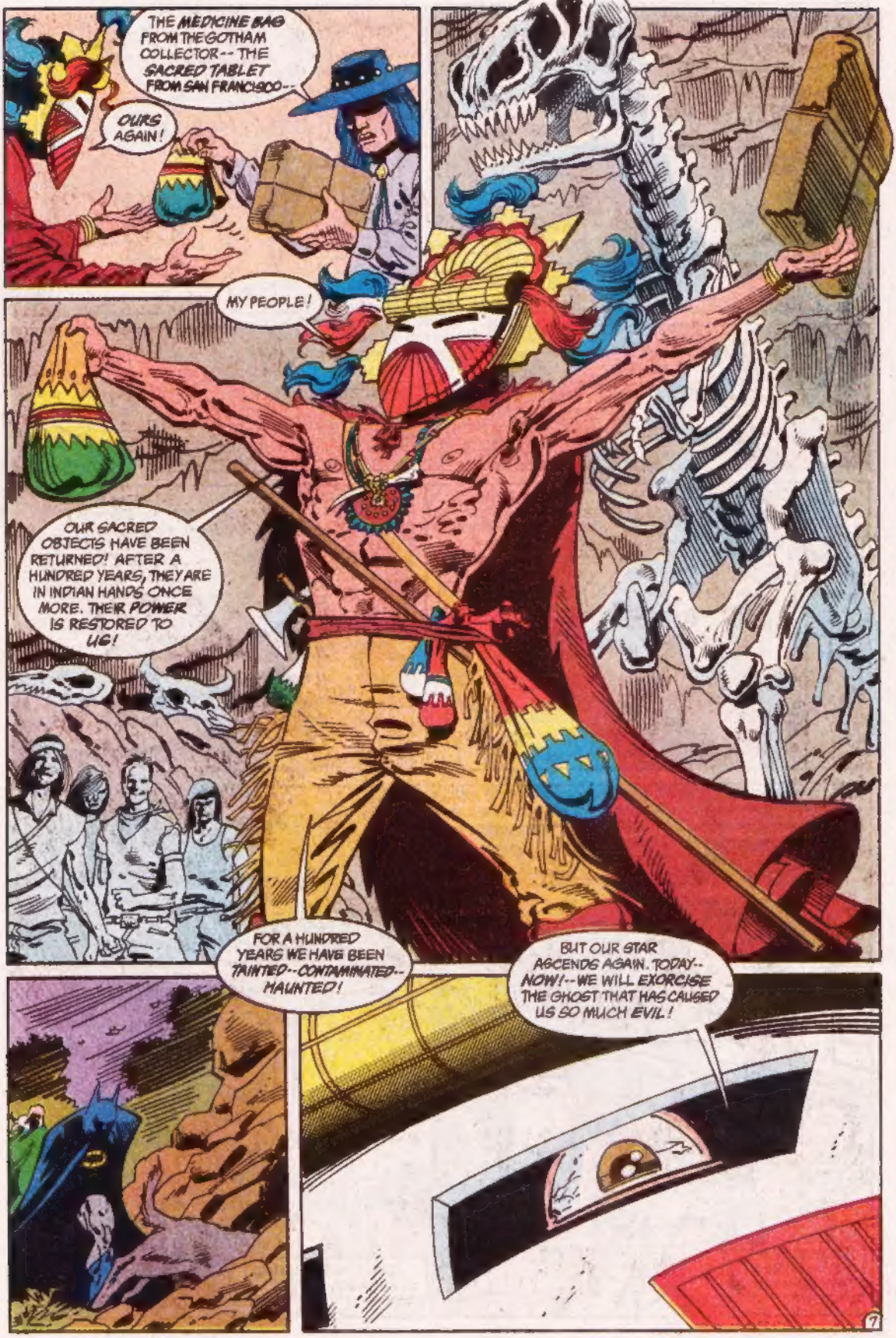

THIS IS CRAZY!
CAVERNS
GIFT SHOP
Entrance
GRAND CANYON CAVERNS
KIDNAPPIN'-- WITH MURDER TO COME! WE'RE ALL GONNA END UP ON DEATH ROW!
ONLY IF WE'RE CAUGHT, BROTHER-- AND TWO-HEARTS WILL ENSURE WE ARE NOT.
YOU KNOW THIS IS THE ONLY WAY!
ALL CLEAR! GET HIM OUT OF THERE!
28KU739
HURRY!
THE STORM BROKE AS WE TURNED OFF THE INTERSTATE ONTO ROUTE 66--
--AND BLACK WOLF ADDED ANOTHER PIECE TO THE JIGSAW...
IT WAS LIKE THIS THE DAY I ENDED MY LIFE AS A SHAMAN... AND THE DAY I BEGAN IT.
2


FOR A MONTH I HAD FASTED AND TORTURED MY FLESH, PRAYING FOR THE VISION THAT WOULD SHAPE MY LIFE--
"THEN MANITOU SHOWED ME MY TOTEM--THE BEAST WHICH WOULD BE MY ALLY, MY PROTECTOR.
"THE BAT!"
"BUT FAR IN THE DISTANCE, PIERCING EVEN THE THUNDER'S ROLL, I HEARD THE WOLF CRY.
"I TURNED MY BACK ON THE GREAT SPIRIT'S GIFT...
"I CHOSE MY OWN TOTEM. I ALLIED WITH THE BLACK WOLF'S POWER. I FOLLOWED MY OWN TRAIL.
"I SEPARATED FROM THE SPIRIT, THE MOTHER AND FATHER OF ALL THINGS. I WALKED THE CROOKED PATH.
"BUT MANITOU FORGETS NOTHING. HE CAN WAIT FOREVER TO CLAIM HIS OWN.
"I GAINED POWER. I PREACHED HATRED. MEN HEARD MY WORDS AND FOLLOWED ME. AND I GREW OLD--


"MANITOU MOVES IN HIS OWN WAYS. NOT LONG SINCE, HE CLAIMED MY EYES--
"--BUT HE WANTED ME ALIVE, YOU SEE. I HAD NOT FULFILLED MY LIFE TASK. SO HE SENT ME DOG--
"--DOG, WHO CAME FROM NOWHERE AND LED ME, AND FOUND ME FOOD WHEN TWO-HEARTS DECLARED ME OUTLAW.
"DOG, WHO KEPT ME ALIVE UNTIL MY TRUE TOTEM FOUND ME AGAIN--"
--MY BAT!
THAT'S AS WELL AS MAY BE. BUT I'D STILL LIKE TO KNOW JUST WHAT THE DEVIL I'M LETTING MYSELF IN FOR HERE!
THIS TWO-HEARTS--?
SELIGMAN
THEY'VE STOPPED!
WELCOME TO SELIGMAN HOME OF THE GRAND CANYON CAVERNS


LOOKS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IS HERE ALREADY!
RUMMBBLLLE
YOU REALLY THINK THIS IS GONNA WORK, BILLY?
AFTER WHAT WE'VE DONE, IT BETTER--
--OR WE'LL ALL BURN IN HELL!
THEY'RE HERE, ALL RIGHT!
LOT OF OTHERS, TOO. STRANGE -- I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT THIS WAS PRIME TOURIST TIME.
NOT TOURISTS. TWO-HEARTS PREPARES THE RITUAL. THE RESERVATION BRAVES FOLLOW HIM.
IT WON'T BE EASY TO TRAIL THEM IN THIS.
FOR YOU, PERHAPS.

SNF SNF
I'LL GO WITH HIM. STAY HERE!
SNF SNF
NO! MANITOU DID NOT SPARE ME FOR NOTHING. I MUST COME!
I DON'T LIKE GOING INTO A FIGHT HAMPERED BY LACK OF KNOWLEDGE -- OR HINDERED BY A BLIND OLD MAN.
BUT IF HIS STORY'S TRUE -- IF THIS TWO-HEARTS IS DETERMINED ON REVENGE -- I'VE NO TIME TO WASTE!
COME ON!
YA-TA-HEY!
TWISTED BILLY! TWO-HEARTS WAITS FOR YOU!
MY BROTHERS!
YOU HAVE BROUGHT THEM...?
WE HAVE, TWO-HEARTS.
6


THE MEDICINE BAG FROM THE GOTHAM COLLECTOR -- THE SACRED TABLET FROM SAN FRANCISCO --
OURS AGAIN!
MY PEOPLE!
OUR SACRED OBJECTS HAVE BEEN RETURNED! AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS, THEY ARE IN INDIAN HANDS ONCE MORE. THEIR POWER IS RESTORED TO US!
FOR A HUNDRED YEARS WE HAVE BEEN TAINTED--CONTAMINATED--HAUNTED!
BUT OUR STAR ASCENDS AGAIN. TODAY--NOW!--WE WILL EXORCISE THE GHOST THAT HAS CAUSED US SO MUCH EVIL!

THESE ARE THE DESCENDANTS OF THE ONES WHO DEFILED US AT RUBY VALLEY!
THEY MUST DIE-- THAT OUR PEOPLE MAY BE CLEANSED!
KAREN LIRE-- GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF THE SERGEANT! DAVID BISHOP, OF THE BUGLER'S FAMILY--
FOR GOD'S SAKE--!
YOU'RE INSANE! YOU SNATCH US FROM OUR HOMES--BRING US HERE-- AND TELL US WE'RE TO DIE BECAUSE OF SOME CENTURY-OLD MUMBO-JUMBO!
AT LEAST LET THE WOMEN AND KID GO FREE--
YOUR PLEAS FALL ON DEAF EARS! YOUR PEOPLE OWE US. WE WILL COLLECT.
THOK!
ACCORDING TO THE OLD MAN, THE CAVES OPEN TO THE TOURISTS ARE JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG. THEY RUN FOR MILES, A MAZE UNDERMINING THE WHOLE PLATEAU.
WAK!
THE INDIANS HAVE HELD THEM SACRED SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL--
KAK!
--NOW, THEY'RE ABOUT TO BE DESECRATED.

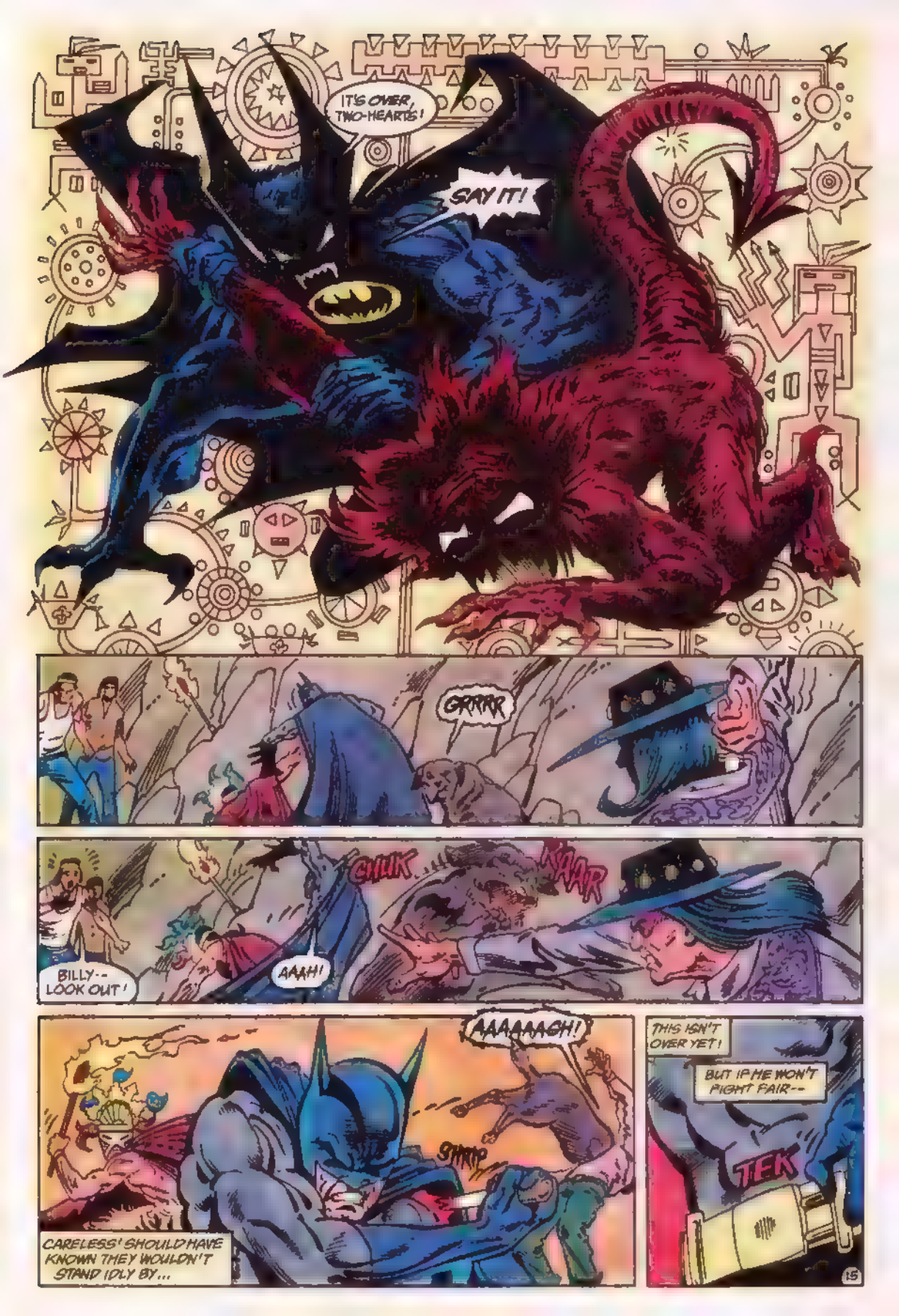
DO NOT HURT THEM. IN THEIR HEARTS, THEY ARE NOT EVIL MEN. ONLY DESPERATE ONES!
LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE RIGHT. THEY'VE A DOZEN CAPTIVES TIED UP!
TWO-HEARTS.. DOES HE DANCE?
YES.
THEN THE CEREMONY HAS BEGUN!
HOW DO WE STOP IT? THERE ARE TOO MANY FOR ME TO TAKE THEM ALL OUT WITHOUT INJURY TO THE PRISONERS!
THERE IS BUT ONE WAY--
MAY MANITOU PROTECT ME.
TWO-HEARTS! ENOUGH!
BLACK WOLF?
SO YOU COME BACK TO US, OLD ONE...

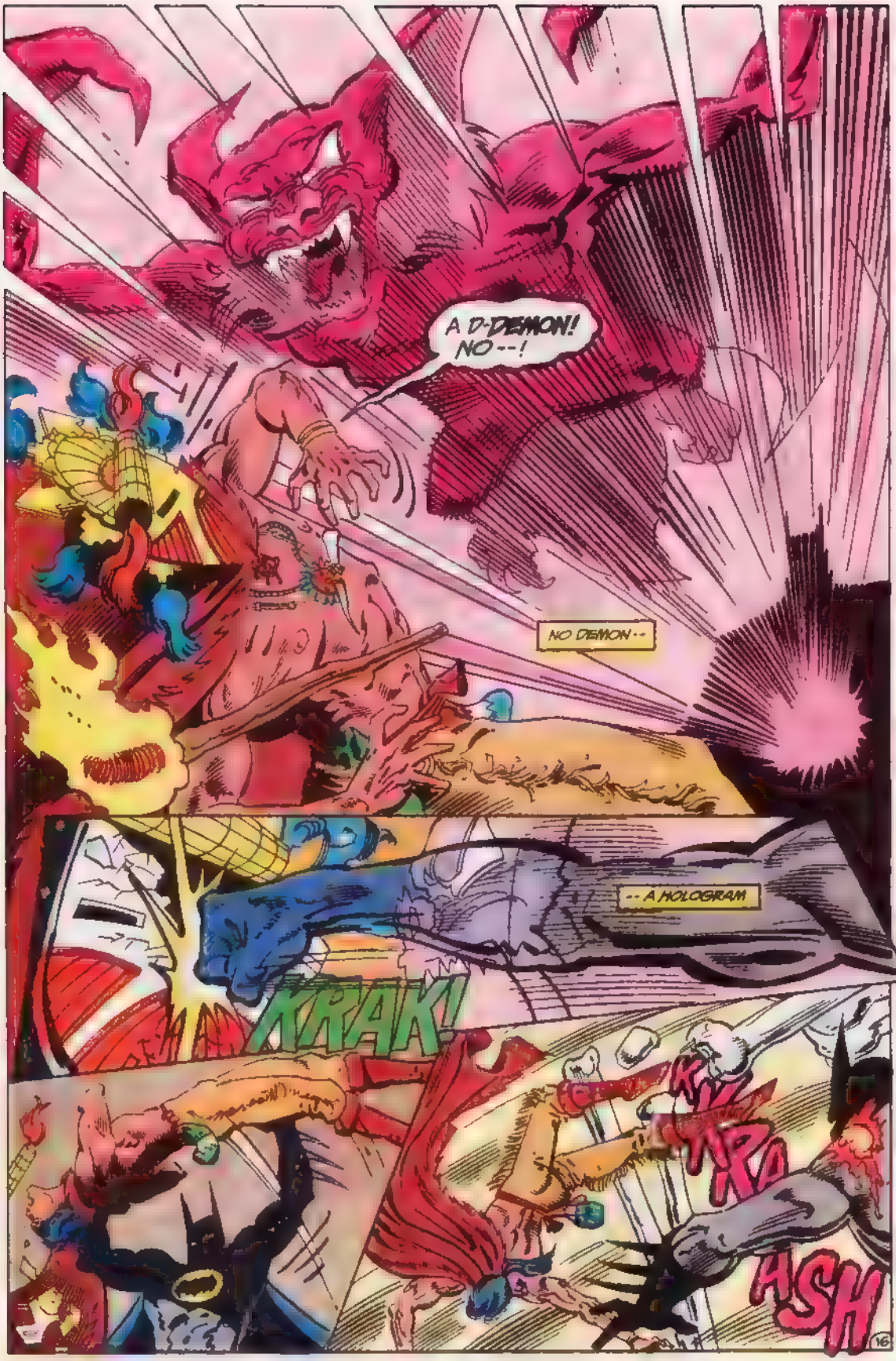
GRANDFATHER...
...BACK TO YOUR DEATH!
SPAP
I CLAIM MY RIGHT TO STATE MY CASE!
FORFEITED WHEN WE CAST YOU OUT, TRAITOR! WE HAVE HEARD YOUR WORDS BEFORE--AND REJECTED THEM!
MANITOU SPEAKS TO ME YOU WILL LISTEN!
YOU ALL KNOW THE STORY OF RUBY VALLEY--HOW THE CAVALRY TREATED OUR PEOPLE! THEY MADE US EAT HUMAN FLESH--THEY MADE A BABY DO THIS
ME!
HIM? BUT THAT HAPPENED NEARLY 130 YEARS AGO!
POSSESSED BY MY OWN FATHER'S GHOST, I DESPISED THE LAWS OF MANITOU AND WALKED THE PATH OF THE WITCHES!
I WATCHED THE PEOPLE SUFFER AS WE LOST OUR LAND AS WE DIED FROM DISEASE AND ROTGUT WHISKEY.
I NOURISHED MY HATRED! I VOWED THAT ONE DAY I WOULD EXORCISE THE GHOST THAT HAUNTED US.
I EVEN BROUGHT MY GRANDSON UP TO SHARE MY HATE

BUT MANITOU HAS RETURNED TO ME HE TOOK MY EYES--AND GAVE ME A MESSAGE GOOD CAN NEVER COME FROM EVIL!
RELEASE THESE PEOPLE! THEY BEAR NO GUILT FOR THE CRIMES OF THEIR ANCESTORS!
LIFE IS SACRED! INNOCENT BLOOD ON OUR HANDS WILL MIRE US DEEPER IN THE EVIL WE SEEK TO ESCAPE!
SILENCE IS YOUR ANSWER, TRAITOR! FOR YOUR BETRAYAL, YOU WILL DIE WITH THEM!
NO! IT ENDS HERE, TWO-HEARTS! I CHALLENGE YOU TO COMBAT...!
FOOL! YOUR POWER IS WITHERED. I WILL BREAK YOU LIKE A TWIG!
HE DOESN'T STAND ALONE.
MY CHAMPION AGAINST YOU, TWO-HEARTS!
THE BAT VERSUS THE SKINWALKER?
VERY WELL I ACCEPT
FWUF
LET IT BEGIN!

TOO FAST! COULDN'T AVOID INHALING IT
WATCH FOR HIS ATTACK--
WAP!
WOW!
BLACK WOLF! HIS POWDER-- IT'S SOME SORT OF DRUG! I CAN'T FOCUS...!
WAR-DUST!
DO NOT TRY TO FIGHT ITS EFFECT! GO WITH IT--
--AND MAY MANITOU SHINE THROUGH YOU!
MY MIND FEELS LIKE IT'S SPLIT IN TWO. I'M STANDING IN THE REAL WORLD. SHADOWS FLICKERING OVER ANCIENT BONES--
A DOZEN LIVES RIDING ON MY ACTIONS--
12

WHILE IN SOME OTHER REALM SOME THING TIMELESS AND UNFATHOMABLE PLAYS OUT ITS OWN DRAMA..
KRAK!
TAK!
HE'S YOUNG, STRONG--
--KNOWS HOW TO FIGHT.
OOFF!
KIK!
13

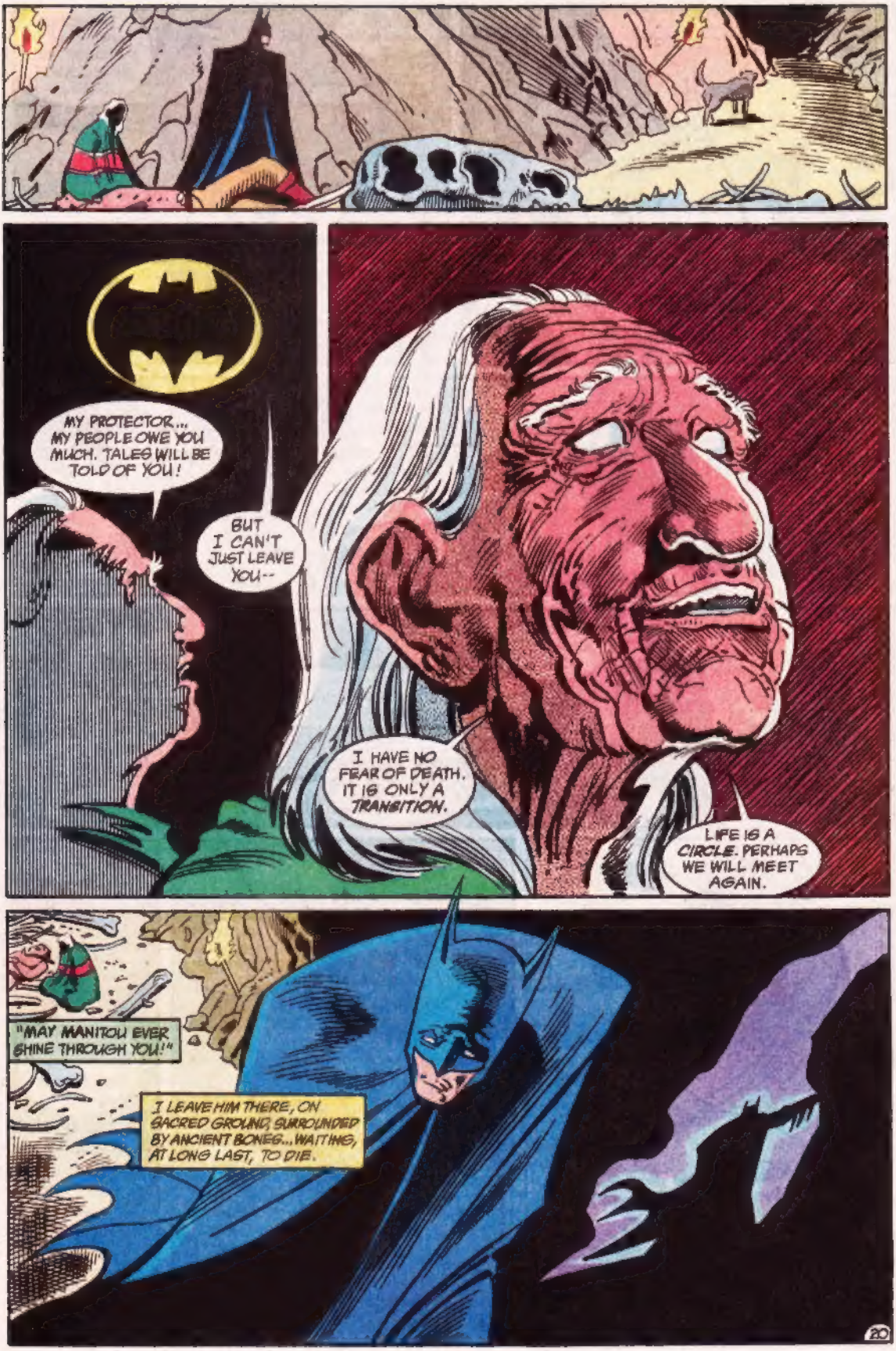

IT'S OVER, TWO-HEARTS!
SAY IT!
GRRRR
CHUK
KAAR
BILLY-- LOOK OUT!
AAAH!
AAAAAAGH!
SHRIP
CARELESS! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THEY WOULDN'T STAND IDLY BY...
THIS ISN'T OVER YET!
BUT IF HE WON'T FIGHT FAIR--
TEK
15


A D-DEMON! NO--!
NO DEMON--
--A HOLOGRAM
KRAK!
KRA
HSH
16

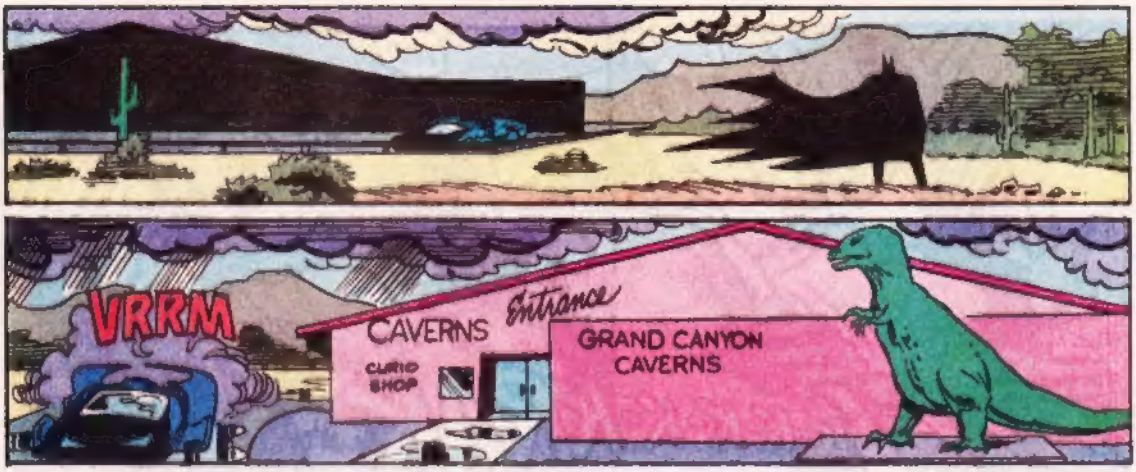
KERAASH!
TWO HEARTS IS DEFEATED YOUR BUSINESS HERE IS FINISHED
GET YOUR PRISONERS FREE!
17

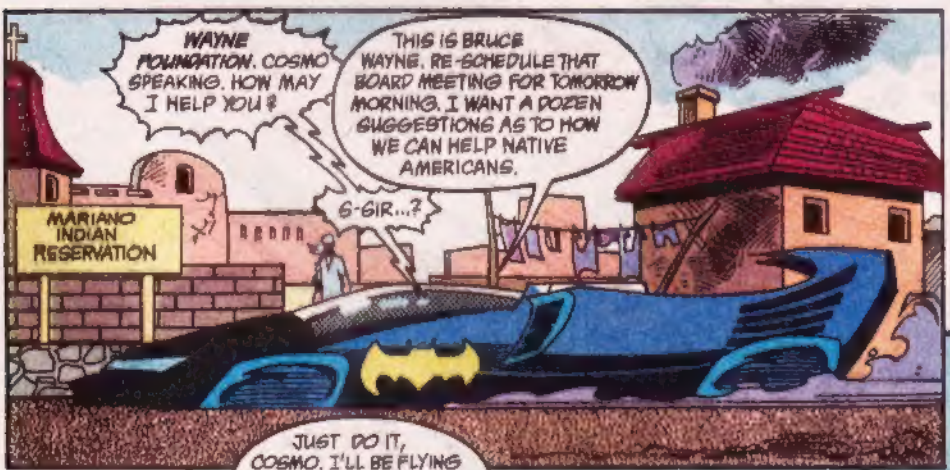
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? IT'S OVER!
NO NOT QUITE.
FOR MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS, A GHOST HAS HAUNTED US
THE CURSE WAS SEALED IN BLOOD--
ONLY BLOOD CAN LIFT IT!
BLACK WOLF!
NO...!
CHUK!
I OFFER MY OWN GRANDSON IN SACRIFICE -- AND MANITOU ACCEPTS. THE EVIL IS LIFTED.
YOU ARE FREE!
RELEASE THOSE PEOPLE!
I AM SHAMAN HERE AGAIN!
DO IT!
18

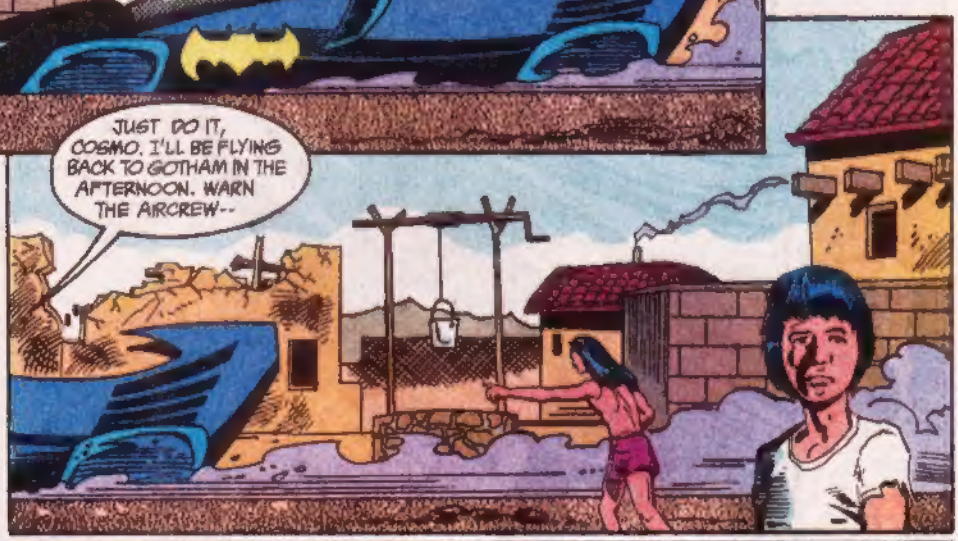
THANK GOD!
YOU'RE SAFE NOW.
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! I-- I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO DIE...!
THERE'S A MOTEL ABOUT A HALF-MILE SOUTH. CALL THE POLICE FROM THERE.
AREN'T YOU COMING WITH US?
GO AHEAD. I'LL FOLLOW.
I KNOW BEFORE HE TELLS ME WHAT THE OLD MAN'S GOING TO SAY.
MY TASK IS FULFILLED. I CAN DIE NOW.
BLACK WOLF, YOU DON'T HAVE TO --
WRONG. MY TASK IS FULFILLED. THERE IS NOTHING TO HOLD ME HERE.
GOODBYE, DOG.
YOUR STAY WITH ME IS DONE. GO WHERE YOUR DESTINY LEADS!
19


MY PROTECTOR... MY PEOPLE OWE YOU MUCH. TALES WILL BE TOLD OF YOU!
BUT I CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOU--
I HAVE NO FEAR OF DEATH. IT IS ONLY A TRANSITION.
LIFE IS A CIRCLE. PERHAPS WE WILL MEET AGAIN.
"MAY MANITOU EVER SHINE THROUGH YOU!"
I LEAVE HIM THERE, ON SACRED GROUND, SURROUNDED BY ANCIENT BONES... WAITING, AT LONG LAST, TO DIE.

RRR
HNF
CRUMBLE
K-K-K-K-KRAKF


VRRM
CAVERNS
Entrance
CURIO SHOP
GRAND CANYON CAVERNS


WAYNE FOUNDATION. COSMO SPEAKING. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?
THIS IS BRUCE WAYNE. RE-SCHEDULE THAT BOARD MEETING FOR TOMORROW MORNING. I WANT A DOZEN SUGGESTIONS AS TO HOW WE CAN HELP NATIVE AMERICANS.
G-GIR...?
MARIANO INDIAN RESERVATION


JUST DO IT, COSMO. I'LL BE FLYING BACK TO GOTHAM IN THE AFTERNOON. WARN THE AIRCREW--

--I'LL HAVE A DOG TRAVELLING WITH ME!
THE END.